METHOD OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

BOOK FIRST

GENERAL VIEW OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT AS FITTED TO THROW LIGHT ON THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

CHAP. I.—INTRODUCTION.

SECT. I.—THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF OBJECTS FROM WHICH WE DRAW OUR IDEA OF GOD.

SUPPOSE that the sun, rising and setting as at present, had been perpetually hid from the eye by an intervening cloud or shade which concealed his body without obstructing his beam, there might still have been a universal impression that a great luminary existed as the cause of the light which daily illuminated our globe. Different persons might have fixed on different objects, as reflecting the light of heaven most impressively; Some on the fleecy or gilded clouds ; others on the lively verdure of the grass and forests, or on the cerulean ocean, or on the rich grain of autumn glistening in the golden beams; but all would have rejoiced to conclude, that there was a LIGHT behind the veil.

Though God is invisible to the bodily eye—though he is, as it were, behind a veil—yet the idea of his existence is pressed on the mind from a variety of quarters. Were it not so, the apprehension of, and belief in, a supernatural power or being would not be so universally entertained. The mind that refuses the light which comes from one region, is obliged to receive that which comes from another quarter of the heavens or earth. It may be interesting to trace to its sources the most important conception which the mind of man can form.